



# STATE SENATOR **BRUCE PATTERSON** IN THE LOOP ★

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**03/17/06**

SAINT PATRICK'S DAY

→ *PLEASE FORWARD THIS TO A FRIEND!*

### **Plymouth Choir to perform in Capitol**

The 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade choir from Our Lady of Good Counsel School, in Plymouth, will perform in the State Capitol Rotunda on Wednesday, March 29<sup>th</sup>, at noon. Some 40 students will be involved. Sen. Patterson looks forward to greeting them that day.

### **'March is Reading Month'**

Sen. Patterson visited three elementary schools in Plymouth and Canton on Friday, March 17, St. Patrick's Day; he read to several 4<sup>th</sup> Grade classes, and donated copies of Anne Margaret Lewis' *Lighthouse Fireflies*. He urges all parents, "Read to your kids; this gift will open the world to them, stimulate their creativity, and enhance their futures."



Field and Ericksson Elementary Schools are on his itinerary in Canton, and Smith Elementary School, in Plymouth. Altogether, the Senator will read to eight classes.

(And, y' can be sure, he'll share a little bit o' the Irish with 'em, too!)

### **“Not forgetting their sacrifice” – Military Monument Protection passes Senate**

“Our fallen soldiers, our honored veterans, secured our cherished freedoms. Can we allow anyone to mistreat their memorials or subject them to encroachment? Should these memorials be displaced or hidden from view, their lands whittled away for another use? I hardly think that is just; nor does it serve our duty to remember them, and to teach our rising generations the price they paid for us,” said Sen. Bruce Patterson.

“Let it not be said of us that we ever forgot those who served, or the supreme sacrifice they made,” he told the Senate. “Were it not for their service, we would not be here today freely discussing and ordering our common life.”

SB 881 and 882 are his two bills to set necessary safeguards for memorials on state land. One bill establishes a Veterans’ Memorial Property Commission; the companion bill is a property act, to oversee and protect military monuments on state lands. No other state in the nation has such a law at present. It could become a model piece of legislation nationwide. It is hoped local governments in Michigan will adopt similar municipal codes.

The bills passed the Senate unanimously Thursday. They now go to the House.

Mr. Ron Nickels of Plymouth, Adjutant of American Legion Post 251, recently testified, “When there is encroachment on dedicated land, any part of a memorial, we feel this is an insult to living veterans, and to the fallen.”

Sen. Patterson concurred, adding, “There is nothing now in Michigan law to prevent such encroachment on military memorials. Lincoln called the Gettysburg fields “hallowed ground.” It would violate that sacred sense to plant a commercial establishment on that land, as was proposed. The same could happen here. But we can set new standards in Michigan. We owe an incalculable debt to those who have given their lives for our freedom, our principles. Protecting their monuments shows our lasting respect and appreciation to our living veterans, and to exalt the memory of those who gave their all for us.”

### **Graduation Requirements Upgraded**

“The status quo in education will not stand in the way of our students’ futures; this will help put Michigan at the forefront of efforts to create rigorous and relevant standards for high school graduation,” said Sen. Patterson. The Senate passed a revised SB 1124, to bring High School Graduation requirements up to date, on Thursday.

“In our new economy, the old approach to education won’t cut it. This legislation will make our high-school curriculum a better preparation for students to meet the competitive demands of the marketplace and of higher education.”

As promised, Sen. Patterson arranged and hosted three public meetings on education in the district since January. Residents were able to express their views directly to the State Superintendent of public schools, Mike Flanagan, or to the Senate Education Committee, or to the Chairman of the Sub-Committee on K-12 Appropriations. Over three hundred availed themselves of these opportunities.

Details of the Senate bill are at [www.senate.michigan.gov/patterson/news/index](http://www.senate.michigan.gov/patterson/news/index) .

## **Medicare Matters!**

Do you have lingering questions on the new Medicare prescription drug benefit? New coverage begins on May 1. To learn about the new coverage and how you can reduce the costs of your medicines, come to Gibraltar Community Center on Monday, March 27, from 10 am to 2 pm.

Sen. Patterson is sponsoring this comprehensive, community-based education program to help people with Medicare, and their families, understand the new coverage, assess their personal situation, understand their choices, compare plan options, then make the enrollment decision that is right for their health and financial situation.

Gibraltar's Community Center is at 29340 S. Gibraltar Rd; the phone is (734) 671-1466.

You should bring documentation:

For the Low-Income Subsidy, documents will show that you qualify for this benefit:

- bank or credit union statements with current balances
- investment statements and stock certificates
- tax returns
- life insurance policies & related statements
- payroll stubs.

For enrollment in a prescription drug insurance plan, bring

- a list of current prescriptions, including dosage strengths and instructions
- your Medicare card
- your preferred pharmacies
- any correspondence received from former employers, government agencies, or a Medigap insurance provider, about the new Medicare drug benefit ('Part D').

For more information, call Sue Trussell (734) 783-1642, or Gil Talbert (734) 671-1466.

## **As April 15 looms --**

If you are in need of tax forms, you can get them from the Michigan Department of Treasury: <http://michigan.gov/treasury/> Look in the lower left of the screen. You can print them from there.

A Taxpayer's Guide is found on Sen. Patterson's webpage, to download or print:

<http://www.senate.michigan.gov/gop/senator/patterson/publications/index.htm> .

## **Other Links for your use or interest:**

Have you ever thought about where you can go to find out about *private grant information*?

Check out the link below to get the latest: <http://www.cmif.org/policymakers.htm>

Want to find out if you have unclaimed property from an old bank account? Go to the link below: [www.michigan.gov/treasury](http://www.michigan.gov/treasury) and look under "Unclaimed Property" in "Quick Links".

Do you know a student getting ready to make plans for after high school? Make sure you check out the website below: <http://www.michigan.gov/mistudentaid>

Would you like the latest version of a State of Michigan Road Map? Click on the link below: <http://michigan.gov/mdot/>

### **Comcast Newsmakers: Patterson interviewed on Long-Range Energy**

Sen. Patterson's interview will be shown on CNN Headline News in the Lansing and Jackson viewing areas during the week of March 13-March 19, three times a day at 54 minutes after the hour.

The Southfield Comcast production team plans to air throughout the Southeast Michigan region in the week of April 24 - 28.

*In the meantime*, go to Sen. Patterson's webpage, < [www.senate.michigan.gov/patterson](http://www.senate.michigan.gov/patterson) >, scroll to the lower right corner, and find the video link there on-line. It runs five minutes.

### **Office Hours schedule for March, 2006**

On **Tuesdays** of each week, Sue Trussell, Sen. Patterson's District Representative, will hold office hours from 11:00am to 1:00pm at the following places:

March 21<sup>st</sup> - Huron Township Hall, temporarily at 17901 Woodland Drive, Suite 1000, in the Huron Commerce Center, (just north of Sibley Road, and west of I-275) New Boston, MI 48164. The Center's phone number is (734) 753-4466.

March 28<sup>th</sup> - Flat Rock City Library, 25200 Gibraltar Road, Flat Rock, 48134 (734) 782-2430. (This includes Rockwood constituents.)

In April, Office Hours will change to *Mondays*, from 11 am to 1 pm.

April 3<sup>rd</sup> - Brownstown Community Center

April 10<sup>th</sup> - Northville Public Library (includes Northville Twp constituents)

### **Contact Information**

Thank you for your interest in our current state issues. If you would like to receive future updates via e-mail, please contact my office at < [senbpatterson@senate.michigan.gov](mailto:senbpatterson@senate.michigan.gov) >. You can also visit me in my Lansing office at 505 Farnum Building, just across S. Capitol Avenue from the state Capitol; or you can send me mail at P. O. Box 30036, Lansing, MI 48909. Telephone (517) 373-7350 or (866) 262-7307; fax (517) 373-9228. I want to hear from you.

See the *Legislative Questionnaire* on the Website, too! Your responses are welcomed!